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A little bird, over the way,
High up in the green waving tree,
Is singing, each bright Summer day,
Its chantings of wildness and glee.
Its feathers are glossy and blue,
A monarch might envy its cost;
An emblem that bride is true,
While love is breathed forth in each note.

Chip! chippy! CHEERUP! cheery! New low, and then high with a swell, While making her nest in the tree, To CHEER UP thy mate it is well.

THE GUN-MAKER OF MOSCOW: VALDIMIR THE MONK.

A Tale of the Empire under Peter the Great.

the New-York Ledger, the great literary weekly paper Our readers will enjoy a rare treat in its permai, and we com mend it to their attention. The author, Sylvanus Cobb, jr., i decidedly the best newspaper story writer in the United States.

THE GUN-MAKER AND THE MONE.

"Ah," returned Ruric, resting his knife a few moments, while he bent his ear to histen to the voice of the storm. I had hoped 'twould snow no more for the present. The snow is deep exough now. And how it blows."

"Never mind," spoke the dame, in a trustful, easy tone, "it must storm when it listeth, and we can only thank God that we have shelter, and pray for those who have none."

"Amen." responded Ruric, fervently.

After this the trio remained some minutes silent, seeming to be busy in listening to the storm-notes that came pealing about the cot. The wind was high, and the snow now came dashing upon the windows with a dreary, melancholy sound. The med was at length caren and the table set beck, and shortly afterward Paul retired to his bed. It was his wont to retire early for he rose early to build the fires and prepare for the labors of the day.

was at length caren and the table set back, and shortly silor-world Paul retired to his bed. It was his wont to retire early, for he rose early to build the fires and prepare for the labors of the day.

Buric drew his chair close up to the fire-place, and leaving against the jum, he bowed his head and pundered arsin. This had become a hairt with him of late. Sometimes he would sit this during a whole hour without speaking, or ever unoving, and his mother did not interrupt him, as she supposed he might he solving some mechanical problem that had arisen to bother him. But these fits of thought had become too frequent, too iergity, and too moody for such a hypothesis, and the good woman was forced to believe that they were caused by something more remore than the business of the forge or the latine. The youth now sat with his brow resting upon his hand, and his eyes bent upon the hearth. For half an hour he had not moved, and his fare wore an anxious, troubled look.

"Ruric, my son," speke the mother at learth, ha low, kind kind tone, "what is it that occupies your thoughts so much?"

The young man started and turned his gaze upon his mother. "Did you speak to me, my mother!" he asked, after having recalled his mind to things about him.

"Yes, my hoy," she said. "I did speak to you. I saked you what it was that occupied your thoughts."

"O mothing—nothing," Ruric answered, after some moments of hesitation, "I was only thinking—that was all."

"I know you were thinking—and I know that was all at the time, but of what, Ruric! Come—hide no secrets from your heart. I have seen you best in thought over your work when I knew that of your work you were not thinking—and I know that was all at the time, but of what, Ruric! Come—hide no secrets from your best. I have feared the aladices was your from your face, and show you are changed. That old smile is gone from your face, and sometimes! have feared the radicuse was your from your heart. I have seen you best in thought over the himself."

"At you won! I have not red! him

"All this thought has been of one persal of the valida."

Claudia Nevel started as she heard that name, and for the while the color forsook her cheeks.

"What, my dear boy—what of her have you thought!" she asked, trenulously.

"What, but of one thing, could I think, my mother! You have seen her!"

"Yes, Ruric."

"And you have marked the grace, the loveliness, the soulgiven beauty of the noble gir!"

"I know she is besattful, my son; and, also, that she is good—as least so I think."

"I know she as beautiful, my son; and, also, that she is good — se least so I think."

"Then what but love could move me with deep thought of her? Oh, my mother, I do love her. I love her with the whole strength of my beart and soul."

"You know not that." the youth quickly registed, his eyes burning deeply, and his brow finaing. "Did I not know she laved me, be sure I ne or would have allowed my thoughts such range. We were children logether, and even them we loved. Fate has dealt differently by us in the years that have passed since those childhood times; but yet I am sure her love for me is toot change; have as increasing age must change all the emotions of our natures into deeper, stronger lights and shades."

shades."

But think my boy: You, a mere artisan—she the offspring of nobility and the ward of a Duke—a stern, cold, proud aristocrat, who looks upon our station only as harsh masters look upon their beasts of burden. I fear you will find little else but misery in such a course of thought."

"At least, my mother, I will see Resalind, and if she loves me as I love her, and if she would accept my hand—"Hush, my boy; do not cherish such hopes. Why should she

mate with thee when the richest nobles of the land would kneel if ther hand?"
"Hold," cried has

for her hand?"

"Hold," cried Ruric, starting to his feet, his handsome face
fluebed, and his bright eye burning. "Speak not thus—at least
not now. I flatter not myself, but I claim a soul as pure and a
least as noble as any man in the land. My mind has clear, my
hores as high, my ambition as true to real greates, and my
will as firm as any of them. If Rosalind seeks the love of a

When Ruric came down in the morning he found the menk already there, and breakfast nearly ready. But little was said during the meal time, for the monk seemed busy with thoughts

"Ah—it may be so; but not like this. There may be a thou-sard faces I would recollect to have seen, but 100 one of them would excite even a passing emotion in my soul. But your face calls up some powerful emotion—sine starding memory of the past—which bothers me. Who are you, good father? What are you? Where have we met before? Was it in Spain!"
"No," said Valdimir, with a shake of the head. And then with a more serious shade upon his face he added—"Let this pass now. I will not deny to you that there may be some grounds for your strange fancies; but I assure you must sacredly that until last might I never came in direct companionship with you before; at any rate, not to my knowledge. You have acted the Good Samaritan toward me, and I hope I may soon return the favor."

the favor."
"No, no," quickly responded the youth, "If you return it then it will be a favor no more. I have only done for you what every man should do to his relighbor; and so far from needing thanks for my services, I would rather give them for the occasion, for I know of no source of joy so pure and uncontaminated as that feeling in the soul whose tells us we have done a good est."
The dark monk reached forth and took the youthful artisun's had and with vore the confirmate contain he said:

The dark monk reached forth and took the youthful artism's hand, and with more than ordinary emotion he said:

"You touch the harp strigs of the soul with a noble hand, my son, and if any deed of kindness can give me joy, it will be a deed for you. We may meet again, and until than i can only say, God bleas and prosper thee."

With these words the monk turned away, and ere Ruric could command presence of mind enough to follow him, he had gone from the house. The youth wished to say something, but amid the varied enotions that went leaging through his mind he could gather no connected thoughts.

After the neak was gone Ruric returned to his bench and resunted his work. He asked his boy if he had ever seen the strateg man before, but Paul only shook his head and answered deboorably.

strates man before, but Paul only shook his head and answered dubiously.

What do you mean?" the gun-maker asked gazing the boy in the face. "Bo you think you have seen him before?" "I cannot tell, my master. I may have seen him before, and I may not. But surely you would not suppose that my memory would serve you better than your own."

Ruric was not fully assured by this answer. He gazed into Paul's face, and he funcied he detected some show of intelligence there which had not been spoken. But he resolved to sat no more questions at present. He had esked enough, he thought, upon such a subject, and he made up his mind to bother himself no more about it, feeling sure that if his boy knew anything which would be for his master's interest to know it would be con municated in dee season. So he applied himself answe to his work, and at noon the pistols were finished.

Toward the middle of the afternoon, just as Ruric had finished tempering some parts of a gun lock, the back door of his shop was opened, and two nen entered. They were young men, dressed in costly fore, and both of them stout and good-looking. The gun maker recognized them as the Count Conrad Damonoff as a list thend Stephen Uteen.

is friend Stephen Uszen.
I think I speak with Ruric Nevel," said the Count, moving

to order arms.

Count turned a shade paler than before, and his nether milled; but Buric thought that might be the result of comrembled; but Ruric thought that night be the result of com-from the cold into a warm place. However, he was som eccived for the Count's extremark was significant: You are acquainted with the Lady Resalind Valda! "he

I am," returned Rurie, new beginning to wonder.

Well, Sir," resumed Damonon, with much haughtiness, erhaps my business can be quickly and satisfactorily settled, any desire to make the Lady Rosalind my wife to make the Lady Rosalind my wife to make the Lady Rosalind my wife to mic Nevel started at these words, and he clasped his hands nice their tremulaumess. But he was not long debating upon solver.

And wby have you come to me with this information, Sir I' saked.

who way have you come to me who has another served.

You should know that already. Do you not love the lady!"
Lpan my soul, Sir Count, you ask me a strainge question,
that right have you to question me upon such a theme?"
The right has every man has to nave the way for his own
that replied Damonoff, tharply. "But if you choose not to
wer, let it pass. I know you do love the lady. And now I
you to renounce all claims to ber hand."
By St. Paul. Sir Count, your tomour runs into strange moods
speech. I renounce all claims to Rosalind Valdal's hand?

Set to you meant?"
Are, Sir—precisely so."

stated your proposition, and I will as plantly answer. I cannot sign the paper."

" Ha!" gasped Damenoff, in quick passion. "Do you refuse!"

" Most flatly " However the Count gased into Ruric's face as though be doubted the evidence of his source.

"It is the Duke's command." he said, at length.

"The Duke of Tula holds no power of command over me," was the gun-maker's calm reply.

" Beware! Once more, I say—Sign this paper!"

"You but waste your breath, Sir Count, in speaking thus. You have my answer."

" By heavens, Buric Nevel, you'll sign this!" the Count cried misely.

"Never, Sir,"

"But look ye, Sirrah: Here is my whole future of life based upon my hopes of union with this tair girl. Her guardism bids me get this paper of you ere I can have her hand. And now do not think I'll give it up so easily I By the saints of heaven, I'll have your name to this, or I'll have your life!"

"Now your tougue runs away with you, Sir Count. I have given you my answer. He sure that only one man on earth can prevail upon me to place my name upon that paper."

"I mean the Emperor."

"I mean the Emperor."

"But you will signt it, hissed Damonoff, turning pale with rage. "Here it is—sign! If you would live—sign!"

"Ferhaps he cannot write," suggested Ursen, contemptuously.

can overlook your plebelan stock."

And with this he turned away.
"Paul," said the gain maker turning to his boy, after the men had gone, "not a word of this to my mother. Be sure."

CHAPTER III.

That night Ruric Nevel had strange fancies while waking, and stratge dreams while sleeping. Long and deeply did he ponder upon the strange business which had called Count Conrad to his shop, and in ne way, under no light, could be get any reason from it. Why he, a youth who had never spoken with he proud Duke, save once on common business, and who was to far down in the social scale, should have been thus called upon to give a virtual consent to the bestown of Rosslind Valdal's hand, was beyond his ken. Ho was but a poor artisan validat's hand, was beyond his ken. He was but a poor artisan -she, a weatthy helrers and a scion of noblitty-and a he was under the legal guardianship of the Duke, whose word, so far as she was cont served, was law. And again, Course Damoond was a Count, and reported to be wealthy. To be sure, he was somewhat dissolute but then a majority of his compeers were the same. Now, if this Count loved the lady Resalind, and had asked for her hand, such the Duke was wilting he should have it, why had the extraordizery proposal been sent to the poor gunnaser!

meser?

Ruric saked this question of himself a hundred times. He would commence and lay down all the premises in his mind, and then he would try to make the deduction; but no reasonable one could be strive at. One thought clung about him like a dim specter at night, which Hope would make as angel, and which Fear would paint a demon. Could like be possible that Resaland had told her love for him, and that the Duke would pay some deference to it? He tried to think so. Hope whispers that it might be so; hat Fear would force itself in, and speak in tones so loud that they could not be misunderstood. Finally, the youth resolved upon the only reasonable course, the concludes to let the matter rest, so far as his own sormises were concerned, until he could see Rosalind, and that he was determined to do as soon as possible.

On the following morning, as he was preparing for breakfast, he saw (Figs. the Duke, pass by, and strike off in the Borodino road. Now, thought he, is the time for the visit to Rosalind; and as soon as he had eaten his breakfast he prepared for the visit. He dressed well, and no man in Moseow had a nobler lock when the dust of tuil was removed from his brow and garb. Paul, "he said, entering the shop where the boy was at work, "I may be back at Loon. At any rate, such is my intention; and if either of those men call who were here yesterday, you may tell them so."

But, "returned the lad, "if they ask me any questions?"

Answer them as you think best."

"Answer them as you think best."

"All them that I hold my life as too dear at the expense of an insuli."

"But surely, my master, the Count will challenge you." exer! Ruric saked this question of himself a hundred times. He

a hasil."

"Hut surely, my master, the Count will challenge you."

"I think he will. And, 'saided Rurie, as an entire new thought ame to his mind, "maybag he came here to create a quarrel to hat end. By my soul, I think he did."

"I am sure of it." said Paul.

A mement Rurie's frame quivered with suppressed passion, not then he said:

"I am sure of it," said Faul.

A moment Rune's frame quivered with suppressed passion, and then he said:

Let them come—and if they come—or if either of them comes, while I am gone, tell them, or him, that I am their very humble servent it all things reasonable."

Paul promised, and then the gam maker turned away. In the hall he threw on his heavy fur pelisse, and having reached the tearest bactely, he took a horse and siedge and started off for the Kremlin, within which the Duke had reelled.

Within one of the surretunedly farmished apartments of the palace of the Duke of Tuis ast Rosaling Valori. She was becauting irigi modeled in perfect form, with the full flush of healthful vigor, and powersing a face of peculiar sweetness and intelligence. She was only inneteen years of age, and she had been ten years an orpian. Her hair was of a colore hue, and the amiliah loved to dwell amid the chatering curis. Her eyes, which were of a liquid him, sparkled brightly when she was hardy; and when the smile though dimply so fher cheeks held the smile even after it had fasted from the lips. There was nothing of the artitocrar in her look—nothing proud, nothing hasping in a declaration of the sould and she can large when she were that the smile even after it had fasted from the lips. There was nothing of the artitocrar in her look—nothing proud, nothing hasping is a continuous of her soul, and she omid only be hangy when she keep that the was nothing of the artitocrar in her look—nothing proud, nothing hasping and a constant show, while the heart may be reeking with vitest sensus ison.

Recalled as there, in the spartment which was hers for her own private use, and she was said and thoughtful. One fair hand supported her pure brow, while with the other she twisted the ends of the silken ash that confined her heavy r.be. Thus she sat when the door of har apartment was opened, and a young sile entered. This new comments and those large dark even of dreamy light which bespeat the child of Masien blood. Her name was Zenobie, an

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"He was; but he is not now."
Not now "repeated Rurie, with surprise. "What

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